तथा गोदामों के निर्माण के लिए अति-रिक्त राज्य सहायता हेतु 250 करोड रुपये का प्रावधान किया गया है।

396. *[Transferred to the 8th May,* 1992]

397. *[Transferred to the 8th May,* 1992]

Different insttitutions for Standardisation

398. SHRI RAGHAVJI: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) what are the reasons for having different institutions for standardisation! such as Bureau of Indian Standards, Stan dardisation Testing, Quality Control cen tres;

(b) what efforts are proposed to be made to merge them together and streng then the existing laboratories under Bureau of Indian Standards; and

(c) what will be the estimated savings after such possible merger?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI KAMALUDDIN AHMED): (a) Besides BIS, other organi-sat-'ons also formulate standards under various Acts|Regulatiorss!Control Orders, etc.

(b) There is no proposal to merge these organisations.

(c) Question does not arise.

Performance of new Public Distribution System

399. MISS SAROJ KHAPARDE:
DR. JINENDRA KUMAR JAIN:
SARDAR JAGJIT SINGH AURORA:

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state

(a) whether it is a fact that even the revamped and expanded public distribution system (PDS) has not brought much relief to the needy for reasons of afforda-bility, accessibility and stability of prices and supplies, according to expert studies as per the newsitem entitled "PDS fails to bring relief to poor" which appeared in the Times of India dated the 13th April, 1992; and

(b) if so, what specific remedial steps Government propose to take in the matter?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI KAMALUDDIN AHMED): (a) and (b) A news item under this title appeared in the Hindustan TJmes (not Times of India) dated 13th April, 1992 This report presents a view point attributed to "Expert Studies", without disclosing the actual source. While it is true that the issue prices of PDS foodgrains had to be increased in order to partiality absorb the increased cost of procurement, the end retail prices under the PDS even after the increase were considerably lower than the open market prices of foodgrains. This is the reason why there was an increased .demand from the States /UTs for wheat and rice to be distributed through the PDS. Under the Revamped PDS the State Governmnets have been requested, *inter alia* to identify locations for opening new fair price shops in the identified blocks; to increased accessibility and to ensure reach of sufficient allocations from out of their overall allocations. The programme is receiving good response from State Governments/UT Administration. It is also incorrect to say that a disproportionately large number of fair price shops are locar ted in the urban areas. In fact about 75 per cent of the fair price shops are in the rural aread.

Inclusion of Goods and services' under Consumer Protection Act

400. MISS SAROJ KHAPARDE:
SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA:

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to stat"-

(a) whethe it is a fact that Government are considering a proposal to bring all goods and services including the Health

Services under the purview of the Consumer Protection Act;

(b) what are the specific recommendations of the National Consumer Protection Council in this regard; and

(c) what is Government's reaction to the recommendation?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL SUPPLIES. CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI KAMALUDDIN , AHMED): (a) Earlier, Government had constituted a high power working group to suggest suitable amendments to make the Consumer Protection Act more effective. The group has recommended inclusion of the following items within the purview of the Act:—

(i) the goods or services which are likely *to* cause loss or injury to consumer;

(ii) services relating to homing construction;

fiii) Hospital services and services relating to water supply, health care etc., provided by local bodies etc.;

(iv) goods purchased for self-employment;

(v) restrictive trade practices like tie-up sales etc.

(b) Central Consumer Prote^'on Council in its meeting held on 31-3-92 accepted the suggestion to include the above items within the purview of the Act. However, the State Food Min'sters opposed the inclusion of health services and other ser-vcisa relating to water supply, sanitation, ete., provided by local bodies within the •nbit of the Act.

(c) The recommendations of the Conn-•II are under consideration of the Govern-nent.

Fires in the Shalimar Tar Plant

401. SHRI SAMAR MUKHERJEE: Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to state ;

(a) whether it is a fact that Shalimar Tar Plan in Lodna area caught fire through the colliery on 17th March, endangering the whole area;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether it is also a fact that the land and the factory belongs to BCCL But stands deserted both by the Private owner and BCCL creating this fire hazard and making the area unsafe;

(d) if so, the reasons thereof; and

(e) the remedial steps taken in the matter?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF COAL (SHRI S. B. NYAMAGOUDA): (a) to (e) The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

Production of coal

402. SHRI R. T. GOPALAN:
DR. RATNAKAR PANDEY:

Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to state:

(a) the total production of coal during the Seventh Five Year Plan vis-a-vis the target fixed;

(b) what is the estimated production and consumption of coal in the country during the year 1992-93;

(c) the measures taken by Government to achieve the target by increasing production of coal;

(d) the estimated production thereof during the Eighth Plan; and

(e) the amount proposed to be spent threon ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COAL {SHRI P. A. SANGMA): (a) The total coal production of the country during the Seventh Five Y«ar Plan period vis-a-vis the targets